



News for Immediate Release

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DWR OBSERVES WATER AWARENESS MONTH IN MAY

SACRAMENTO -- The Department of Water Resources (DWR) reminds the public that May is "Water Awareness Month," a time to appreciate and carefully use the water resources essential to California's special quality of life.

"Water is vital to California's people, animals, ecosystems and economy," noted DWR Director Mark Cowin. "As warm weather and vacation season arrive, the need is greater than ever to use water wisely and practice water conservation."

DWR, in partnership with the Association of California Water Agencies (ACWA), will continue to run the "Save Our Water" program. The program, which was created by Gov. Schwarzenegger's 2009 drought declaration, aims to educate Californians about easy ways to conserve water indoors and outdoors. Visit the Web site at www.saveourh2o.org

Sierra snowpack and winter rainfall increased in much of California in early 2010. As April ended, Sierra snowpack water content statewide topped 130 percent of average for that time of year. But the State still is recovering from three consecutive dry years. Some major reservoirs are lagging below average. Lake Oroville in Butte County, the key Northern California storage reservoir for the State Water Project (SWP), stands at just 56 percent of average.

Reflecting these conditions, SWP deliveries for 2010 currently are estimated at 30 percent of the amount requested by the SWP contractors. If wet weather patterns continue, a slight adjustment to 35 or 40 percent in the final SWP allocation for 2010 could occur.

Water Awareness Month originated during California's 1987-1992 drought to help educate consumers on using water resources efficiently. During the recent three dry years, many regions activated drought restrictions and intensified their water conservation efforts. As of April 2010, 67 local water agencies in California mandated water conservation while 56 other agencies urged voluntary conservation practices.

In May, DWR will publish its 2009 Update to the California Water Plan, the most comprehensive report available on water issues, including supply and demand, conservation, global warming impacts and water resource management. Persons interested in reading the report can access it online at www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/cwpu2009

During May 4-7, DWR officials will participate in ACWA's annual Spring Conference. The association represents some 450 public water agencies that deliver more than 90 percent of California's water supply.

DWR staff will engage in several special Water Awareness Month events at several locations around the State. Below is a list of local events:

Sacramento -- "Get Wet" Event. On Saturday, May 1, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., family activities, games, garden tours and conservation tips will be featured at the Ninth Annual "Get Wet" Event. Sponsored by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Mid-Pacific Region, the event takes place at the American River Water Education Center at Folsom Dam, at 7794 Folsom Dam Road in Folsom. DWR will staff a booth with water education materials, including water conservation tips from the "Save Our Water" Program. For details on this event, call (916) 989-7132 or email ibr2foodarwec@usbr.gov

Central California -- A traditional Kids Fishing and Fun Day is scheduled on Saturday, May 15 at O'Neill Forebay near San Luis Reservoir in Merced County, from 8 a.m. to noon. The forebay and reservoir are located west of Los Banos and Interstate 5, reachable via State Highway 152. This event is designed for young anglers, 15 and under. Attendees enter at the San Luis Creek Recreational Area turnoff, on State Highway 152, seven miles west of I-5. For information, call the Romero Overlook Visitors Center at San Luis Reservoir, at (209) 827-5353.

Oroville -- On Saturday, May 8, DWR employees will take part in a Goldrush Activity event as part of Oroville's annual Feather Fiesta Days community celebration. Events are scheduled from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Parking Lot A, at Montgomery, Meyers and Huntoon Streets in downtown Oroville. Attractions will include games, food, displays, a Forebay Aquatic Center Activity Booth and Jack Splash Club. For information about DWR activities, contact John Ford or Rosemary Martin at the Lake Oroville Visitors Center at (530) 534-2306, or contact the Oroville Area Chamber of Commerce at (530) 538-2542 or access the Chamber's Web site at www.oroillechamber.net

Southern California -- On Saturday, May 8, employees from DWR's Southern Field Division will take part in the Castaic Lake Water Agency's annual Open House from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. They will assist children constructing "Pizza Gardens," an activity helping youngsters understand plant growth, food production and the water cycle. For more information, contact Kathy Simmons at DWR's Vista del Lago Visitors Center near Pyramid Lake in northern Los Angeles County. The phone number is (661) 294-0219.

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The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.

Contact the [DWR Public Affairs Office](#) for more information about DWR's water activities.